

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. DUCKWORTH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first, let me thank you, Madam President, and the entire staff for being here at 2 in the morning, but getting this omnibus bill done is an important thing to do. It is my expectation that we will be able to lock in an agreement on the omnibus tomorrow morning. We are very close, but we are not there yet. I ask Members to be alerted to be here at 8 in the morning when we will have the first vote on a nomination to bring everybody here, to get final agreement, and then to move forward.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 774, 995, 451, 1258, 768, 1281, and 1282; that the Senate vote on the nominations, en bloc, without intervening action or debate; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and that the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nominations of Sara C. Bronin, of Connecticut, to be Chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for a term expiring January 19, 2025; Evelyn Wang, of Massachusetts, to be Director of the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy, Department of Energy; Howard A. Van Vranken, of California, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Botswana; Joey R. Hood, of New Hampshire, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Tunisia; Jainey Kumar Bavishi, of New York, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere; Sue Ellen Moore, of Washington, to be a Member of the Marine Mammal Commission for a term expiring May 13, 2023; and Andrew J. Read, of North Carolina, to be a Member of the Marine Mammal Commission for a term expiring May 13, 2025, en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

RECOGNIZING THE VERMONT NATIONAL GUARD

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, during my time as a Senator, one of the responsibilities I have cherished most is my role in supporting and strengthening our Vermont National Guard. I have worked closely with the Guard throughout my time in the Senate and since 1999 as cochair of the Senate National Guard Caucus. During my tenure, the Vermont National Guard has never let the people of Vermont down, and I have always tried my best not to let them down.

Tracing all the way back to the New England militias that served in the French and Indian War, groups formed from early settlers in a remote and forested region spanning what is now called Vermont took on the name the Green Mountain Boys. Banded together by the legendary Ethan Allen from a need for local defense, they eventually became an integral component in our Nation's broader national defense strategy. And Vermonters kept answering the call, from 1812, through the Civil War, to our 20th century wars and the overseas deployments since September 11.

Today, our Guard is a diverse and modernized organization, with the same capabilities as its active component peers. At the beginning of my tenure in the Senate, the National Guard was called "weekend warriors" and regularly relegated equipment that was old and discarded from the Active Duty. I worked hard to support efforts that integrated the National Guard and reserves into our Active military forces—often referred to as the Total Force Policy. In partnership with several Presidents and Secretaries of Defense, we have all seen a transformation of how our Nation deploys and calls on our National Guard. That culminated in the passage of the National Guard Empowerment Act that was coauthored by my Guard cochair LINDSEY GRAHAM which elevated the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Over my years in the Senate, I made it a point to fight for equipment worthy of the contributions to the Nation made by the Vermont Guard, such as ensuring the Army Guard fielded the M1 Abrams tank, and that when it converted to a mountain brigade, that it had gear like modern snowshoes and equipment like the icy terrain navigating SUSV. They have proven time and again the value of the National Guard, earning praise at every level of the Department of Defense.

For the Air Guard, too, modern equipment in the hands of such talented people has made the difference. It was Vermont Air National Guard pilots who first secured the skies over New York City following the devastating attacks of 9/11, and they flew F-16Cs that at the time were some of

the most advanced in the Air Force. When the Air Force decided to do something it had never done before and place the second squadron of the most advanced fighter aircraft in the National Guard before all but one Active-Duty squadron, I made sure they stuck to their word, and Vermont was selected for the F-35A Lightning II. This year, they proved the wisdom of that decision, playing a key role in reassuring our NATO allies who feel threatened by Russia's murderous campaign in Ukraine and its belligerence throughout Eastern Europe.

In 2011, while reviewing the carnage Hurricane Irene inflicted on Vermont, I saw firsthand the devotion to service woven throughout the ranks of the Vermont Guard. While flying over the State alongside then Adjutant General Michael Dubie, I witnessed rural communities that were completely cut off because of historic flooding. I saw those same villages and hamlets reconnected with transportation and communication networks as a result of the tireless work of Vermont Guard engineers. Hurricane-impacted Vermonters were fed by supplies dropped from Vermont Guard helicopters, assisted and reassured by Guard patrols moving all around the State, and rendered medical aid by Vermont Guard medical personnel.

While Hurricane Irene stands out in our State's history as our costliest national disaster, it was not our first and it was certainly not the only disaster the Guard helped pull Vermont through. For more than 2 years, the Vermont Guard was activated domestically in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Soldiers and airmen established medical surge facilities, helped with logistical operations at the Strategic National Stockpile, set up testing sites, and distributed food to out-of-work families. They accomplished their mission related to the pandemic even while also supplying critical units to the National Capital Region to support security operations following the Capitol attack of January 6, 2021.

Not to be forgotten, Vermont's cyber and information operation units work daily to protect our grid or train others in responding to malicious cyber attacks. These experts skillfully and lawfully bridge the divide between civilian government and our military. They provide wisdom and Federal resources to municipal and State government organizations faced with the ever-evolving task of securing information networks and civil infrastructure. And in keeping with Vermont Guard tradition, many of these soldiers and airmen have helped to set the national standard for how the Department can most appropriately assist local governments in achieving their goals related to cybersecurity and event response, as they did when our local hospital system was hacked.

The soldiers and airmen of the Vermont National Guard distinguish themselves not only in military contexts, but also in their civilian lives,